

Observation/Submission relating to planning application for Lissinagroagh Wind Farm

ACP-324290

Senator Nessa Cosgrove,
Seanad Éireann,
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Kildare Street,
Dublin

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála,
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Date: 08th July 2026

RE: Observation/Submission relating to proposed wind energy development at
Lissinagroagh Wind Farm

Ref No: 324290

Location: Lissinagroagh, Approximately 3km Northeast of Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim

Applicant: FuturEnergy Ireland

A chara,

I wish to lodge a formal objection to the proposed wind energy development at Lissinagroagh, near Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim on the grounds of the size of the turbines and their impact upon the local and global environment, the geological unsuitability of the location and the impact upon biodiversity and the human population.

1) Environmental Impact:

The proposed development is situated upon blanket bog, which will be significantly disturbed not just by the installation of the turbines, but also of the supporting infrastructure such as roads, cabling, drainage and ducting.

Blanket bog is known to play a vital role in biodiversity conservation, regulating water and local climate and in control of erosion. Blanket bog also acts as a carbon sink, storing carbon which would otherwise be discharged into the atmosphere as Carbon Dioxide gas.

Cutting into the blanket bog in order to install wind turbines, and the additional infrastructure required, particularly roads, will cause significant disruption to significant amounts of blanket bog. This will not only release stored carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, adding to the greenhouse effect, it will also cause drainage, the lowering of water levels and the drying out of peat. In turn this will result in shrinkage and further destabilisation of the remaining peat.

Along further consequence of the drying out of mountain bogs, is a significant increase in the risk of land-slippage.

2) Geological Unsuitability

Page 16 of Leitrim County Council's publication, *Leitrim's Geological Heritage, An Exploration of the Geology of County Leitrim* (2022) outlines the geological make up of Dough Mountain, which has many "cavities in the limestone underground". Some of these cavities have opened up at surface level and can be up to 30m across and 20m deep. The structure of the mountain is not as impervious as it appears to the naked eye, accentuating the potential for land-slippage.

Furthermore, the plentiful and abundant surface and underground springs, streams and waterfalls continue to erode the alkaline limestone (particularly as the peaty water is acidic). As a result of drainage caused by digging into the blanket bog, the amount of acidic water coming into contact with the alkaline limestone will increase, speeding up dissolution of the limestone and increasing the possibilities of further cavities opening up, and once more increasing the likelihood of land-slippage.

Furthermore, in the event of pollution caused by the disturbance of the blanket bog, or the carrying out of industrial activity, the surface and underground springs and streams would also act as transmitters of pollution into more significant water courses, streams, rivers and lakes, including Lough Melvin and Lough Gill, sources of water for human consumption.

3) Biodiversity Impact:

The area in which the proposed development is located includes Dough Mountain and Saddle Hill, both of which are areas rich in biodiversity. Seven of

the nine species of Bat resident in Ireland are known to live in the vicinity. Other protected mammals resident include Pine Martens, and Hares, while Otters are known to range through the area. Protected raptors living in the area include Hen Harriers, Merlin, and Buzzards, while sightings of Golden Eagles, recently re-introduced in adjoining Donegal, have also been reported. Ground nesting birds including the Red Grouse, and the migratory Sand Martin have their home on the slopes, while Meadow Pipit and Skylarks are common in the uplands, as easily witnessed when visiting the proposed site.

Mosses, lichens and various species of grasses and heathers, along with lichen and orchids and wildflowers are evident to even a casual observer. Apart from their intrinsic worth, they sustain a varied insect population, including the Marsh Fritillary butterfly, one of 32 resident and 3 regular migratory species of butterfly in Ireland and the **only** species of butterfly legally protected under the Wildlife Act (1976) and the EU Habitats Directive.

4) **Human Impact:**

I understand from individuals who attended consultation events in advance of the planning application that the number of residential dwellings, and the numbers of residents in the local population were not accurately represented in the plans and maps. This included the total **omission** of homes from the maps submitted as part of the planning process. This has resulted in the proposed location of wind turbines in completely unsuitable locations that will have a devastating effect, particularly upon those individuals and their families.

The particular impacts that the presence of such a large number of large wind turbines includes:

Noise pollution, including infrasound which can not be heard by most people, but which has been shown to have physiological impact upon many, including disorientation and pressure. Infrasound has been attributed to the presence of wind turbines. This noise can be all pervasive, can be heard indoors and out, and while not generally disruptive to those exposed to it for a short period of time can result in significant disruption and sensitivity to the impact, to those living within the area.

Shadow flicker, particularly during clear weather and at particular times of the day, such as early evening and late afternoon, when the Sun is lowest in the sky, can cause significant disruption and discomfort.

Impacts include distraction and sleep disturbance and, in some cases, shadow flicker can trigger seizures amongst individuals who live with photosensitive epilepsy.

The concrete, physical impact of living close to a wind turbine may be experienced particularly by people living with existing mental health difficulties, such as anxiety, approximately 7% of the adult population in Ireland. While rates

of mental health difficulties are no higher amongst the population of North Leitrim, the lack of availability and accessibility of mental health services locally, means that the impact will be greatest upon those affected.

As the Significant Impact Range of the flicker can occur in a range of up to 10 times the diameter of the turbine, given the height of these turbines, an exclusion area of almost 2km for residences should be considered, to allow the impact to be nullified.

A total re-examination of maps and plans to ensure that all inhabited or habitable homes are included and accurately recorded is required as a matter of urgency.

Conclusion:

The size of each of the 14 proposed wind turbines, amongst the tallest in Ireland, is of an unprecedented size for the location. The tip of each turbine blade will be up to 185m in height. A 2010 Planning Application for 8 no. 80m wind turbines in the same area was rejected because of its potential impact.

The impact of the proposed wind farm will be far greater, and the potential for harm to the local population, both human and non-human, will be even greater should this proposed development be permitted to go ahead.

As an elected representative in Seanad Éireann, representing the community who will be impacted the most, those living in the immediate vicinity, and in the wider area of Manorhamilton and North Leitrim, I would like to express my opposition to this particular development, in this particular location.

I am in favour of the development and roll-out of renewable technologies, including wind farms, but this site is unsuitable in many ways, including but not exclusively those factors detailed above, for a development of this size and scale.

There are additional concerns regarding tourism, and the capacity of the local and national grid to cope with the energy generated by the proposed windfarm, however, I feel that these can be better addressed by those with more technical expertise in the fields concerned.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission, and should you wish to explore it in any further detail, I am available at Leinster House, on 083 0324860 or at nessa.cosgrove@oireachtas.ie

Signed: Nessa Cosgrove, Seanad Éireann